

[Keepsakes To Prox](#) by [TalesAvail](#)

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Summary:

Based on a thought I had earlier on Prox's dragon folk and if they'd hoard things like traditional dragons do. In which Saturos and Menardi waste money, contemplate their life goals and yell at Kraden for being a doofus.

Keepsakes To Prox

When one's party journeyed through their homeland's vast, varied landscape, certain things couldn't be avoided. Sure, their group needed to rest, eat and tend to other natural functions, but their captors usually kept them on a tight schedule. Lest they be slow in recovering Weyard's dying lifeblood across the nation.

However, there was one area where the duo always relented, no matter the place or time.

They were corralled in an exquisite shop in Tolbi, offering many exotic goods and weapons from all over. The paired Proxians had sauntered off, hand in hand, to gawk at the merchant's wares. Their shared adoration of coins and fine material goods had stunned Jenna and Felix initially, but they shook it off.

Like any warrior worth their salt, the two had gotten many surplus coins, taken from felled beasts and human fighters alike. That seemed natural enough. But as time passed, their captives took note of how gleeful Saturos and Menardi were to prowl every town's shops, large or small.

Sometimes Felix would catch them caressing their money, playfully tossing coins to each other. Other times, they brought in a wealth of items, from the aforementioned stores. It was quite jarring to see these fierce, stoic warriors so preoccupied by seemingly trivial matters, but they had a rapturous delight over it all. If anything, their curiosity allowed the group some time to themselves, at the very least.

At that moment, the two were at a section promoting local, handmade toys and sculptures. Menardi's agile hands lifted up a particular novelty, examining it closely. Carved in the shape of a traditional dragon, slim, pink fingers wove around its painted exterior. Colored with shimmering, fiery tones, the wooden toy seemed vividly real, as if it could move and wield fire as she and her companion could.

After all, the duo personally knew of such things, sharing many features with Weyard's dragons of myth. Perhaps their glut of currency and goods was instinctive to a dragon's hoarding desire, borne from a need to obtain as much wealth and power in material form. Or perhaps it was a deeper longing-

A pang of sorrow trembled within in her heart as she thought of her home and its fellow "dragon" folk. She stroked the toy lovingly, caressing it on her cheek. "Oh, isn't this one just darling?" the woman exclaimed, gazing at her lover with that same affection. Turning away from plush versions of Djinni, Saturos peered at the faux dragon with a knowing grin. "It's quite nice," he said, reaching out to pat it as well. "Stick him with the rest."

On his command, Menardi gently placed her mini wyvern in a basket Saturos carried. It was filled to its brim with assorted weapons, accessories and other rare items. Their hearts and cart heavy with pride and purpose, the duo searched around for their captives, calling throughout the shop.

Felix was the first to reply, walking up to them, brandishing a new Great Axe of his own. Holding the basket up to his chest, Saturos turned to the other man, with an sly, accomplished grin. "You got more junk, didn't you?" he asked, the man's bundle unavoidable. Nodding with

excitement, he looked down to his stash as Menardi mirrored his movements.

"Look at this stuff, isn't it neat?" she inquired, pointing to her dragon toy and some Elixirs. "Wouldn't you think your collection's complete?" Felix shot back, his voice dripping with snark. Saturos looked up, peering at him with bemusement.

"Wouldn't you think we're the troupe who has everything?" he asked, still heavily proud of his stash. "Well, you guys keep getting items from every town we've stopped in." the other man remarked. "Look at that trove, "treasures" untold. How many "wonders" can Menardi's ship hold, in all honesty?" Felix paused, composing his thoughts. "I've wondered, is it just you two or is hoarding a Proxian thing, period?"

At his query, Saturos and Menardi looked at each other, dumbstruck by the notion. They'd never given deep thought to their shared quirk, seeing it as perfectly natural.

"I recall a man who kept birds and old books back home," Menardi stated, fingers at her cheek once more. "But he was a bit touched in the head, to speak." Glancing at her beloved, he stood still, also lost in thought. "Right." Saturos replied. "Otherwise, I don't remember any other Proxians like us." Their captive watched them carefully, noting their thoughtful hesitation on the matter. "Is it that unusual, Felix?" the man asked, shame and remorse creeping into his voice.

Felix's eyes were shot open, struck by how uncomfortable he and Menardi seemed with his inquiry. In all his time spent around them, cooped up in Prox or out on their journey, he'd never seen them so distraught. Despite their typically hard

demeanor, the man knew they had vulnerabilities, like any other living beings. Somehow, it felt inhumanly wrong to have unknowingly insulted them, considering they'd been generous to shelter and train him all this time.

"Guys, you look unwell," Felix stated, attempting to disarm their uneasy feelings. "I didn't mean anything of it! So let's forget I said anything, okay?" They gazed at him, their discomfort lessened. In the corner of his eye, he could see his sister about. The man pointed to her, alerting his captors of her presence. "Look, there's Jenna!" he exclaimed as the duo peered in her direction.

Now relieved, Saturos waved to her, trying to catch the girl's attention. Jenna seemed caught up in her own shopping excursion, twirling about as she tried on lavish, embroidered coats and gauntlets. Felix walked up to his sister, tapping the girl's slim arm. "Aw, it's time to go?" she asked, stealing a glance at her captors. With a slight head shake, she put her garments away, trailing behind Felix with treasures of her own.

"Come now, we mustn't dwaddle," Menardi coaxed, looking around for their last party member. "Where'd ol' Kraden wander off to?" Huffing and puffing, Saturos had reached a cashier, resting his heavy basket on her counter. "Dear, take the kids and go find him," he said, digging around for coins as payment. While the cashier sorted through his purchases, Menardi scouted around, growing agitated.

"Is he at it again?" Felix asked his sibling, rolling his eyes in disbelief. For his many years and vast knowledge, their elder Kraden was a rather wily man. His habit of taking off to explore Weyard's towns along their trek only fanned Menardi's aggressive nature, leading to lots of heated arguments between the two.

Jenna shrugged, following the woman with her eyes. "I bet he's doing some Lucky Dice now!" she said, her mouth in a relaxed grin. Menardi exited the shop, still scanning its space. "He went on and on about it since we got here." Listening intently, Felix heard Saturos and the cashier prattle over bagging options.

"He's done paying," the man stated, his eyes also at the exit. "I paid for my Axe; do you need get your stuff done?" Jenna shook her head as Menardi stormed in, her crimson eyes burning with a familiar disgust. "That daft Kraden, he's not here!" she grumbled, a hand at her forehead. "Where could he have run to? What was he yammering on earlier?"

With her free hand rubbing her chin, the woman peeked around, searching for her more behaved captives. Saturos approached her, several stuffed bags around his arms. "I believe he wanted to gamble, love," the man replied, calm and cool as ever. "Right, but it's a pain in the ass, having to fetch him." she remarked, gesturing Jenna and Felix to follow them out of the store.

"But at least, we've got our goodies to make up for his insolence," the woman breathed out, her tone becoming more relaxed. Leaning close to her lover, she rubbed against him, taking some bags off of his person. "I swear, you and our trove are why I get up some mornings." His burden eased, Saturos properly nuzzled Menardi back, his flowing silvery-blue hair against her own flaxen locks.

Eventually, Kraden's rascally soul was found, indeed spending his own acquired coins at the Lucky Dice. After the elder had been "properly" scolded, their group checked into an inn to rest. As the duo went into their own room, Menardi kicked off her boots and hopped into the bed. She stretched her limbs out, feeling the delightful pull of her bones

releasing the day's tension. Her companion was putting their things, old and new, into an dresser.

The woman began to laugh, an incredulous cackle that eased into a silly, playful chortle. "And what's so funny, here?" Saturos inquired, a grin creeping onto his own face. The final bags were tossed at their bed's foot as he joined her. With his form above hers, their crimson eyes met, shining with lively joy.

"Maybe Felix was right," she replied, pulling him closer to her. "Maybe there is something the matter with us." There was other breathy laugh. Eyes peering all over their room, Menardi caught glimpses of their collected items. "We've got weapons and Gauntlets a plenty, Elixirs and Circlets galore-"

"You want thingamabobs, we've got twenty!" Saturos chimed in, envisioning their other treasures stowed away in their ship. Smiling brightly, he eased off, now lying next to his beloved. "Now, I'm sure he didn't mean it," he suggested, picking up a coin bag on the nightstand. "He's seen us and was curious about over things."

"I know he didn't," Menardi said, clasping his free hand in hers. "Still, it's like "hell if I know" why we're like this." The metallic clatter of coins filled their room as Saturos absentmindedly toyed with his currency. "See, right there!" she pointed out, grabbing some of his coins. "You know what you're doing, right?"

Glimpsing golden bits against his blue fingers, Saturos studied his palms intently, attempting to seek an answer from them. "Sure, I'm aware of it," he replied, growing more puzzled. "Now, tell me, darling. Why are you doing that?"

Rubbing a heated coin between his digits, Saturos mused over her question. In his pondering, the man dug his hand

into the bag, grabbing more golden pieces. He handed them to Menardi, dropping them in her own open palm. "They feel nice, but that's probably not why. Why don't help me find out, love?"

The woman couldn't complain, seeing as she loved their metallic form on her fingers as well. "That's true, they are exquisite to touch," she murmured, tossing a coin in the air. Menardi watched it leap up, spinning about. "I'm not sure what else, though." More of her coins were tossed as the duo watched them, enthralled.

"I got them as birthday gifts when I was a kid, so they were rarer then," Saturos suggested, feeling cool metal ping on his forehead. "But I'll never forget felling my first beast, watching it spill them all over." He smiled warmly at his memory as Menardi caught her currency with a smirk. "Right, how could one forget?" the woman chimed in, her soul warming as well. "So nice it is to be paid for one's skill." Her smile softened at the notion.

"Maybe that explains the coin thing," she said, to her lover's surprise. "Think about it, you've never seen that many coins in Prox, have you?" Saturos nodded, his gaze brightening. "Correct," he stated. "They could only dream of being this well off, having the world at our command-" A twitch of longing and sorrow struck him to think of his hometown.

"Oh, I feel awful, imagining Prox now," the man murmured, eyes now becoming cloudy. "I can't imagine how bad things are because of the changing weather. Everyone must be shaken up, your sister's probably worried sick-"

"Dear, things are bad all around," Menardi stated, trying to comfort her lover. "It's not just home. But, it eats me up, too." To think, what'll happen if we fail our quest?" At her

query, the man's eyes shot up, blazing with fear and indignation. "Don't you dare say that!" he cried out, clutching her entwined hand tightly. "We've gone too far to let everyone down!"

Glancing around their room stuffed with items and currency, Saturos gazed at his beloved once more. "I'm sorry, but it's true!" he exclaimed as Menardi watched him with lurid fascination. "We've grown so much from travelling Weyard, been given opportunities others could only imagine!" She nodded as he continued his speech. "Menardi, the Wise One may have fated us our duties, but we can do the same for our trove!"

"What do you mean?!" the woman asked bluntly. Searching around for her new toy, Saturos dug around bags. Having located it, he placed the item in her bare palm. "What I mean is that we'll give these items new life, for others!" he remarked, growing hopeful. "Once we save our world, and get back home, we'll give our treasures to everyone there." Menardi gasped, struck by his cleverly charitable concept.

"That way, they'll be keepsakes to Prox, reminders of our journey." the man continued, clasping his palms together. "A way to show them what Weyard is like, to show how hard we tried-"

"-a way to give our items reason." Menardi said, her tone driven with hope and purpose. She stroked her dragon figure tenderly yet again, imagining how dear her sister would find it. "Yes, Karst would love this guy," the woman thought inwardly. "Mama would like some medicinal Herbs, Papa deserves a Silver Vest-"

Overcome with emotion, Menardi jumped at her lover, smothering him in an affectionate hug. "You're brilliant!" she

whispered softly, hot breath against her pointed ear. "Leave it to you to make sense of everything."

"So you think there's nothing the matter with us two, then?" Saturos asked playfully, embracing her back. "Absolutely not." the woman replied, rubbing his cheek once more. "I feel more right in what we're doing than ever, darling."

"Fine by me," he said. "We'll start sorting stuff in the morning, okay?" Nodding in response, Menardi leaned in to kiss him softly. She pulled back, their noses nearly touching. They stayed their embrace, feeling the warmth of their flesh and the coolness of coins over themselves.

It'd been a treacherous journey throughout, but the duo were comforted that every part what they did had a higher purpose. Even their "hoarding" was enlightened too, reflecting on their finer tastes, study of other cultures and opportunity to let their fellow Proxians live vicariously through their presence. They eventually got up to meet their captives for dinner, with a cheerful thought playing in their minds.

"I don't see how a world that makes such wonderful things can be bad."